Agreement with China for exchange of Hydrological Data

†*34. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 274 given in the Rajya Sabha on 22nd July, 2003 and state the progress made with regard to exchange of hydrological data of rivers originating from China?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): During the then Hon'ble Prime Minister's visit to China in June, 2003, the Indian side expressed its desire to expand exchange of hydrological information to cover the Sutlej river as well, which would help in forecasting floods and preventing damage to life and property. The Chinese side conveyed that they will consider the request and would make plans for developing the relevant hydrological stations. This matter is being pursued with the Chinese side by Ministry of External Affairs.

Completion of infrastructure projects

*35. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to improve the spending on infrastructure projects like National Highways Development Programme, railway privatisation programme, port development through the proposed Rs. 1 lakh crore Sagar Mala Project and metro projects;

(b) if so, what improvements have so far been made in spending on infrastructure;

(c) to what extent these projects are being implemented; and

(d) what is the latest progress and by when these are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

The National Highways Development Programme (NHDP) and Delhi Metro Project are currently under implementation. The Sagar Mala Project is not an approved project yet. There is no Railway privatisation programme. However, Rail Vikas Nigam Limited has been set up to undertake bankable projects through public private partnership. The physical and financial progress of the projects is closely monitored.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) Of the NHD Programme, the Golden Quadrilateral is complete up to 48%, East-West North-South Corridor up to 8% and port connectivity and other projects up to 18% in physical terms as on 31.05.2004. Delhi Metro project has achieved physical progress of 65% up to 31.05.2004. The projects are expected to be completed as per the following schedule.

Golden Quadrilateral-December 2005

East-West North-South Corridor-December 2007

Port connectivity and other projects-December 2007

First Phase of Delhi Metro-September 2005.

Upgradation of Kolkata and Chennai airports

*36. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to upgrade the Kolkata and Chennai Airports to new international airports;

(b) the other steps proposed to provide best travel facilities to visitors coming to India; and

(c) in what manner the resources are to be mobilized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Kolkata and Chennai are already international airports. The facilities at these airports are regularly being upgraded. Currently, works like construction of Hanger (Including apron), strengthening of D-Taxi track and strengthening of main runway 19L/01R including CAT-II lighting at Kolkata Airport and extension of international apron to runway 07 at Chennai Airports are in progress. Major projects for upgradation are also proposed to be taken up at these airports during the 10th Five Year Plan.

(b) Various existing standardised passenger facilities are being provided/upgraded at these airports.

(c) The resources for these developmental works are being met from internal resources of the Airports Authority of India.